

1244. In this regard, we fully support the efforts of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General to establish democratic, self-governing institutions in Kosovo based on clearly enunciated principles in accord with Resolution 1244.

We thank and congratulate Mr. Kouchner for the remarkable work he has done in difficult circumstances. We welcome the action jointly carried out by UNMIK and KFOR. We pledge our full support for Mr. Haekkerup who has recently been appointed the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Kosovo.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina we welcome the constructive contributions of the High Representative and of SFOR to the building of a functioning State. We note with satisfaction that those parties committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina's European orientation received the majority of the votes in the recent general election. We expect the new authorities to demonstrate their commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's European reform agenda by taking the necessary urgent actions on key political and economic issues. Any government, at State or Entity level, must base its action on strict compliance with the Dayton Agreements and the ensuing obligations, in particular the conclusions of the Ministerial Conferences for the implementation of those Agreements.

We welcome the continued progress made elsewhere in the region. However, we are concerned at increased political violence in Albania and support the Albanian Government's efforts to uphold the rule of law.

We call upon all States in the region to continue and intensify efforts to resolve bilateral differences and internal ethnic minority issues exclusively through peaceful, democratic dialogue, and to show full respect for international obligations including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Releasing Funds From the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

December 18, 2000

Today I am directing my administration to release \$156 million to help low-income households throughout the Nation cope with substantial increases in home heating fuel costs. The significant and sustained rise in energy costs has posed a special burden on low-income families, in many cases forcing them to choose between food and other essentials or a bare minimum of heat in these winter months. Releasing these heating funds today will ease the burden on the Nation's low-income families by helping cover their higher home heating costs in the cold weeks and months to come.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Military Personnel as Part of the Kosovo International Security Force

December 18, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In my report to the Congress of June 16, 2000, I provided information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. military personnel as the U.S. contribution to the NATO-led international security force in Kosovo (KFOR) and to other countries in the region in support of that force. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peace-keeping efforts in Kosovo.

As noted in my previous report, the U.N. Security Council authorized member states to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999. The mission of KFOR is to provide a military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities; verify and, if necessary, enforce the terms of the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Federal Republic of